



John Elias Baldacci, Governor
BG John W. Libby, Commissioner
Arthur W. Cleaves, Director

Emergency Management MESSENGER

News for Maine Emergency Management Officials

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FROM the DIRECTOR

by Art Cleaves

I realize that for those who read the MEMA Messenger, I may be preaching to the choir. But I thought it was important to remind our readers that first responders across Maine are a special type of people—the kind who give their time for those in need, whether at an accident scene, structure fire, or simply a lost kitten.

Volunteering or full-time service—it all starts with caring and sacrifice at some level. Firefighters, policemen, EMTs, and hospital staff are people who truly care about other people, and give their time and risk their own personal safety on behalf of strangers. These are true professionals, again whether full-time or volunteer, these individuals make caring about others their own profession.

By way of example, when the call for help went out from Florida's victims of Hurricane Charley, Maine was among the first States to send volunteers to assist with the recovery efforts.

Interestingly enough, **Governor Baldacci** called me to ask what assistance Maine could provide to Florida in the wake of the first of what would be three hurricanes to hit their state. The very next day after Charley struck, our Governor placed

a call to Florida's Governor Jeb Bush to offer Maine's assistance. In the meantime, the national mutual aid system called EMAC (Emergency Management Assistance Compact) was already in the process of lining up skilled volunteers to help in Florida.

As most of us in the emergency management community already know, EMAC was developed to be an automatic emergency system to provide mutual aid between States accounting for liability, worker's comp, and payroll for any State in need. Trained and experienced responders and relief workers can be made immediately available to the requesting State, without any of the "red tape" that too often hinders timely disaster relief.

MEMA received the call for EMAC assistance shortly after Governor Baldacci spoke with Florida's Lieutenant Governor. Shortly thereafter, Maine had 4 volunteers packing their bags for Tampa. Those individuals included three from York County: **Ray Parent, Pam L'Heroux, and Robert Bohlmann**, as well as Aroostook County's **Vernon Ouellette**.

I don't have to remind any of you that responding to others in need isn't always easy. The conditions

that Ray, Pam, Bob, and Vern found themselves in weren't exactly comfortable; but knowing they were helping victims who had lost everything in the disaster was a humble reminder of why they were there, and how fortunate Maine families are to suffer a low number of natural disaster events.

Looking back, though, there were some lighter moments for our Maine volunteers. Bob Bohlmann, who I understand is somewhat (a lot) afraid of snakes, will forever be able to tell of the "cottonmouth" snakes jumping from trees! And Chief Parent, a veteran responder to many cases of dog bites in Maine, found himself on the wrong end of an incident with a poodle at one location. We're glad Ray was all right, and I'm sure he will have a greater respect now for even the smallest dog breeds!

Little did we know at the time, but Hurricanes Frances and Ivan were soon to devastate much of the rest of Florida, as well as other states along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. And to Maine's credit, even more willing volunteers were ready to make the trip south to help those in need. Pam L'Heroux is on her second tour of duty for hurricane relief. Other Maine people working as volunteers

(continued on page 9)

County Directors Meeting News

Three awards were given out at the September 15 County Directors Meeting held in Augusta at the State EOC. We are all proud of the great job these dedicated Emergency Managers are doing for the citizens of the State of Maine.



Dale Rowley, EMA Planning Contractor and Deputy Director of Waldo County Emergency Management, received an award from the County Directors for service to the Emergency Management Community in Maine. Dale helped in the preparation of County Hazard Mitigation Plans and with the development of several Emergency Operation Center [EOC] operations forms.

Sylvia Birmingham, Knox County EMA Director, accepted an award from MEMA Director Art Cleaves for having the second Hazard Mitigation Plan conditionally approved by FEMA Region One in Maine. The first county plan approved in FEMA Region One [and the State!] was Rick Farris's of Waldo County. Way to go **Sylvia** and **Rick**!



George Flaherty, Cumberland County EMA Director, received an award from Art for being the 2004 Northeast States Emergency Consortium (NESEC) Manager of the year for Maine! George said at the presentation that his job was more fun when he was a local director because he had more resources available to do the job. He also told the audience of other Maine County EMA Directors that he learned a long time ago to plan. "If you fail to plan, you'll fail when you have to respond to an event."

So the feds declared September to be National Preparedness Month. What does that have to do with me?

by Lynette Miller, MEMA

Elsewhere in this newsletter [page 3], we published the tips for citizens that MEMA, along with the Red Cross in Maine, the Maine Citizen Corps Council, and the Governor's office published to the media at the beginning of month. Yes, Preparedness Month, like Groundhog Day, is easy to shrug off, no matter who declares it to be important. But it's an opportunity to stop and think about how we would respond to any emergency.

Do you know what your biggest hazards are, and what parts of your town are most likely to be affected by them?

Do you have a plan? Does everyone in town who is going to respond know what his or her role is?

Are your people adequately trained for their emergency roles? Not just your first responders, but the town clerk and the code enforcement officer who might have a different role in an emergency?

Do you know who in your town might need special assistance in an emergency? The nursing home, the day care center, the wheelchair-bound person living alone.

Do you have adequate mutual aid agreements in place? Have you talked with neighboring towns about ways you might work together in a major disaster, such as another ice storm?

Do you have adequate resources to respond to your citizens in a major disaster? Do you have a generator to run the public safety building? Do you know how to ask for resources if the disaster is too big for you to handle alone?

How well do you know your County EMA Director?

Does your local EMA director occasionally talk to the road commissioner and code enforcement officer about ways to reduce damage from future floods, for example? Is there adequate insurance—including flood insurance—on your public buildings?

Yes, it's easy to shrug it off when someone unidentified "fed" decides it should be National Preparedness Month. But shouldn't every month be preparedness month? What did you do today to make your town a safer place?

National Preparedness Month: Tips for Mainers to “Weather the Storm”

AUGUSTA, MAINE—September is “National Preparedness Month”. The Maine Emergency Management Agency, American Red Cross chapters in Maine, and the Maine Citizen Corps Council remind Mainers that with planning and some simple actions, all of us can “weather the storm.”

Learn:

- What emergencies could affect you where you live or work?
- How would you be affected by those emergencies? Would your home be at risk? Your workplace? Your children's school?
- How can you get ready for these emergencies? What can you do to reduce the risk of damage to your home? What is your insurance coverage?

Plan:

- Decide with your family how to communicate with each other if you are separated. Gather the phone numbers of local responders and keep them next to your phone, and a copy in your wallet or car. Do your children know how to call for help? Make sure your plan covers any family member's special needs. After making your plan, practice it!
- What supplies would you need if your family had to stay in your home for several days, possibly without power? The things you don't already have you can purchase gradually to balance out any cost. What different things would you need if you had to evacuate? Don't forget a battery-operated NOAA weather radio. It's a terrific tool to keep you informed about storms and other emergencies. There are even models that help warn those who are deaf or hearing impaired.
- Make a plan to take care of your pets, especially if you may have to leave your home.

Be Aware:

- Stay well informed about what's going on, every day.
- Keep track of the latest weather reports. Turn on that weather radio!
- Listen or watch the news carefully. Make sure you have accurate information about what's happening.
- Make sure you are aware of orders or recommendations advised by officials in your area.

Act:

- When an emergency is imminent, carry out your plan.
- Take the steps needed to ride out the event safely in your home.
- Evacuate if advised to do so.
- Work as a team with your neighbors. Help each other. Are there folks in your neighborhood who might need extra help?

Help Others:

- Support the disaster relief fund of an organization that's working to help victims. Don't forget local organizations – food kitchens and local volunteer groups help people every day through emergencies large and small.
- Remember that cash donations are the most helpful. Cash allows relief organizations to obtain exactly what's needed at the scene.
- Survivors of Florida hurricanes still have many needs, and hurricane season continues through November 1st. Visit <http://www.floridadisaster.org> to find out how to help.

Get Involved:

- Help out the planning team that's building an emergency plan for your town, your children's school, or your workplace.
- Join a local volunteer response group, such as your local fire department, Community Emergency Response Team, a local chapter of the Red Cross, Salvation Army, or other group that helps out in an emergency.
- Join an organization that responds to disasters around the country and around the world. Use your special skills to help those in need.

We can all weather the storm, whether it's a hurricane, winter storm, or an emergency of another kind. MEMA, the Red Cross, and the Maine Citizen Corps Council will be publishing more detailed tips throughout National Preparedness Month.

For more information on family and community preparedness, safety and volunteer opportunities, visit:

The Maine Emergency Management Agency: <http://www.maine.gov/mema>

The American Red Cross: <http://www.redcross.org>

Maine Commission for Community Service/Citizen Corps: <http://www.maineservicecommission.gov>

The Maine Community Policing Institute Safety Center: <http://www.be-safe.org/me/mcpi/>

Including Deaf and Hard of Hearing People:

Disaster and Emergency Planning for ALL Community Members

by **Meryl C. S. Troop**, Director, Office of Deaf Services and Multicultural Diversity, Department of Health and Human Services

Whatever the disaster—ice storm, flood, school bus accident, bioterrorism—and whatever the resulting chaos, injuries, and rescue and aid efforts, it is that much more terrifying and confusing for those who cannot hear. Imagine not being able to hear the sounds of the rescue team as they get closer, not able to understand the instructions of police, not able to find out where to get information about your child in the chaos, not able to make out the words of the Red Cross volunteer, no matter how well meaning and sincere they seem to be.

Deafness is an invisible disability. You can't tell by looking at someone whether or not they have a hearing loss. Hearing aids aren't a reliable clue, as many deaf people do not wear them; even fewer have hearing dogs—assistance animals trained to work with individuals with a hearing loss. Statistically, about 8% of the population has a hearing loss, ranging from mild to profound; 1% is profoundly deaf. Those who lost hearing later in life tend to rely on speech reading and written communication, and speak for themselves. Those who have been deaf since early childhood tend to use sign language both receptively and expressively.

Deaf and hard of hearing people are unique individuals of all ages, races, educational backgrounds, and professions. Some are married, some have children; some live alone, some in group homes; some use hearing aids, some not. What they all have in common, however, is that they do not receive auditory information that can warn of impending weather and other dangers, or where to go for help, shelter and other rescue services. TV emergency broadcasts now include captioned information more often, but with a power outage both TV and the telephone (with the electricity-dependent TTY machine) become useless. Obviously radio is out! Here in Maine there is a classic story in the deaf community of a man who was plucked from his roof to safety by a helicopter—he hadn't heard the flood warnings; and a tragic tale of a deaf family who lost loved ones and their home to fire because they did not understand the safety instructions in using a propane heater during the ice storm.

The recent Portland Jetport disaster drill was a case in point. Three deaf individuals volunteered to act as victims. Unfortunately, due to the difficulties of communicating with the deaf community in general, by the time they volunteered, all the 'victim' roles had been taken. They were not informed of that. Upon arrival, two of the three were given the roles of family members and sent to the Double Tree Hotel to wait. They had no idea what was going on. An interpreter arrived about an hour later, after having been sent to several wrong locations. The deaf participants were finally able to communicate their frustration at not participating in the way they had been prepared for, and an hour of being incommunicado. One deaf individual never made it past security and went home in frustration. Luckily, this was only a test.

The recent legislative session passed L.D. 1819, which will create a system to distribute emergency alert pagers to deaf and hard of hearing people throughout the state. There are technical glitches that will prevent this from being fully operational for some time to come, but it represents a huge step in the right direction. So, what else can we as a community and as service providers do to ensure an equal level of safety and rescue supports?

- Engage in dialogue with the deaf and hard of hearing members of your community and service area to pre-plan what would work best for them in the event of an emergency. Contact the Maine Center on Deafness (207-797-7656 or 1-800-639-3884) to locate the individuals and to look at systemic or statewide issues.
- Contact specialty housing such as senior centers and group homes to see if there are deaf or hard of hearing individuals with additional health and safety needs.
- Obtain a TTY machine, publicize the TTY-accessible telephone number, and train all staff and volunteers in how to use it.
- Educate staff and volunteers about the Maine Relay Service: a Communications Assistant (CA) types your verbal message to the TTY user and reads aloud the typed message back to you. There is no charge for the service, which is reachable by dialing 711 from most phones.
- Know where to locate qualified sign language interpreters in the middle of the night. Encourage staff and volunteers to learn to sign—enough to make victims and families feel comfortable until the interpreters arrive.
- Consider the emergency lighting needs for those who communicate visually, in sign language and by speech reading. Never shine a flashlight into the faces of deaf or hard of hearing people, rather, illuminate your own face to maximize the chances of comprehension.
- Make eye contact, smile, and relax. When a deaf person can't understand your words he or she will read your body language and facial expressions in an attempt to figure out what is going on.
- Don't shout. Speak normally to enhance speech reading. Keep information clear and simple, check for comprehension by asking open-ended questions (ones that can't be answered by 'yes' and 'no')
- Hire an interpreter to ensure understanding. Someone who took a sign language class or two can be very helpful but is no substitute for a trained professional who can accurately transmit vital medical or forensic information. Know where to find interpreters and the agency procedure for authorization and payment.
- Never use children as interpreters, even for seemingly simple or short communication. Children are neither accurate nor impartial, and it skews the family dynamic placing children in a parental role. It's better to write it in plain English, draw pictures, act it out, physically lead to safety, and orient to facilities.

Maine School Security Conference

by Gene Maxim



MEMA, the Maine School Management Association, and the Maine Department of Education are partnering up to work towards safer and better prepared schools. A committee with personnel from all three entities was formed and has been meeting since June of this year.

One of the first things that this partnership will produce is the Maine School Security Conference to be held November 8 at the Augusta Civic Center. We are planning for the attendance of two hundred school officials: principals, superintendents, board members, nurses, counselors, transportation directors, school facilities managers, the sixteen County EMA directors, and a few selected emergency management officials.

The conference will begin with a welcome and introduction by Commissioners **Susan Gendron** and General **Bill Libby**. One of the

featured speakers will be **Ken Trump**, the president of National School Safety and Security Services. Ken is a nationally recognized expert on school security and the message he brings to this conference is important to all school personnel.

After Ken's presentation attendees will choose one of two breakout sessions: "Developing and Exercising a School Emergency Plan" (led by the York County EMA Director, **Robert Bohlmann**, and a school principal); and "Working With Your Local Police and Fire Departments" (led by a principal, sheriff, and fire chief).

A second set of breakout sessions will be held on "Securing Your Physical Plant" (led by Maine State Police personnel); and "New Construction—Designing for Security" (led by **Robert Ducibella**, a senior principal with a Connecticut security firm, and Tyler Smith, a founding principal of a Hartford architectural firm.)

After the provided lunch, **Tim Culbert** of Bomb Threat Training and Consulting, Inc. will present "Bomb Threats, Explosive Devices, and Explosive Chemical Awareness" as it relates to the school environment.

Next a panel presentation will be given involving a case study of what went right/wrong during an actual event in Maine that resulted in the transportation of nine students for medical treatment.

The conference will close with "School Security and Legal Issues" (presented by **James Schwellenbach**, an attorney with the law offices of Drummond, Woodsum and McMahon in Portland.)

Information and registration forms are being printed and will be mailed out in the near future to intended audiences. The conference cost is fifteen dollars and will include lunch. At this time there are no future plans to repeat this conference. Now is the time to seize this opportunity.

The Department of Education, the Maine School Management Association, and MEMA will be working to offer a second conference in the spring that will focus on designing and building schools that reduce safety and security risks. At this time the intended audience for this conference will be architectural firms and construction companies with school construction interests. Communities must use "Built Smart" techniques, especially with schools, to reduce liabilities that have the potential to be enormous.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY CAPABILITY

by Rayna Leibowitz, MEMA Planner

When you work through the “what if” situations your jurisdiction may face, consideration needs to be given to business continuity. This might include relocation of activities, restoration of functions and resumption of services, and should consider steps for both a short period (say, a week or two) and a longer period (perhaps 2-4 months). This will require some advance planning.

Essential Functions: The first step is identifying essential functions. At a minimum, what must you be able to do, what minimal equipment needs would you have, what length of time might a disruption be acceptable and resumption possible? For those essential functions that must be resumed immediately (public safety, public works), it is necessary to have procedures in place that will enable the services to continue. This might include alternate dispatching capabilities, alternate notification methods, alternate work sites, etc.

Lines of Succession: If the person in charge of each essential function was not able to work, do you have pre-established authorities for who will be in charge next? We encourage establishing these lines three deep.

Evacuation Plans for each work site: These should be posted showing egress routes and include a gathering or muster point so everyone can be accounted for.

Plan for Financial Management: Many of us are very dependent on computer operations for critical revenues, critical expenses and payroll. If computer operations were unavailable, are there manual processes and procedures that can be used?

Employee Calling Tree: Do supervisors have readily available means of contacts for all employees at work, or if they are away from their work site, in case they must be notified of a disaster?

Electronic data/Application backup: Are computer operations backed up regularly and stored off-site or in a secured location? Do you have adequate IT support to restore systems if necessary?

Alternate Operating Site: Have you pre-identified a location where essential functions could be performed for a short time or an extended period? You must identify space requirements and equipment needs to ensure they are met. Inherent in this is identifying the minimal staffing required and establishing policy of who will do what functions and how will those employees not working be handled (paid leave, unpaid leave, etc). If operating from home locations is an option, is there adequate infrastructure to support that?

It might be a useful exercise to begin asking questions now and jotting down the answers to begin your Business Continuity Plan. Exploring options today will facilitate better decision making and smoother transition to emergency response and recovery later.

Your County Emergency Management Agency Director may be a useful resource in this effort. Please contact that office if you have questions.

Deafness Symbols

International symbol for
deafness



Interpreter services are
available



Amplified Phone is available



Services are accessible to
people who are deaf-blind



TTY is available



PARTNERSHIPS IN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Kennebec County Emergency Management Agency

Guest Columnist: Mark Belserene Deputy Director KCEMA
(Reprinted from an article to the Fire Chiefs Association Newsletter)

Complacency A Key Component for Homeland Security Consideration—Time takes us further and further away from that day of devastation we will all remember: September 11, 2001. The feeling of vulnerability that many Americans experienced in the wake of that tragedy has faded a bit. That fading effect has also taken place with many members of our nations first responders. The primary objective of having a proactive approach to homeland security is now in the shadow of a federal moneybag funding feel-good items awarded with sporadic consistency.

A key component of this reduced feeling of vulnerability or threat is in part caused by complacency. Too many dollars are being squandered on a handful of pagers and firefighting SCBAs for rural emergency responders that will not likely play a pivotal role in the response to a WMD incident. The doling out of federal dollars to ensure every agency gets something has replaced the leadership needed to address risk and support regional efforts.

Just prior to the 2004 July 4th weekend, generic intelligence bulletins put law enforcement and security personnel on the lookout for suspicious men wearing three-quarter length coats with wires hanging out and suspicious men

praying to Allah in a foreign language. Do we really need to be alerted to this type of activity?



Mark Belserene

Some causes for complacency include the fact that we have had no repeat terrorist incidents. We may have over-used our national alert system. We are inundated with the investigation of suspicious activity with no follow-up. This leaves us wondering who it was, tourist or terrorist taking pictures of the George Washington Bridge. Other factors include a looming bureaucracy that widely broadcasts threat alerts that are more like informational bulletins to the average public safety responder.

How many local law enforcement and security agencies hit the delete button before reading informational email bulletins

from homeland security officials? When you receive fifteen to twenty emails in a week it makes one complacent. Meanwhile, all other crime and security concerns have not disappeared.

Some solutions may be to direct information more precisely to the area of risk. Triage serious and credible threats to allow local law enforcement agencies to prioritize their actions. Establish clear law enforcement patrol objectives that are specific to the threat.

Finally, keep it simple, concise, and think how it may apply to a particular locality. Understand that information must reach four general mindsets. The same message must reach the very informed and interested, the partially informed and somewhat interested, the removed that only care about getting money for other uses, and the people who think “it will never ever happen here so don’t waste my time with any of it.”

The operations and enhancements made by the office of Homeland Security are a huge asset to our nation and have certainly thwarted terrorist activities. Fine-tuning this program and looking at smaller components of the big picture is the key to a balanced cooperative approach to emergency response planning.

How You Can Help

by Lynette Miller, MEMA

The Maine Emergency Management Agency, American Red Cross chapters in Maine, and the Maine Citizen Corps Council remind Mainers that disaster can strike anywhere. We all feel the urge to help when we see or hear stories or see images of those who have lost everything. Throughout the southeastern United States, survivors have many needs. Here's how you can help disaster survivors "weather the storm."

- Support the disaster relief fund of an organization that's working to help victims. **Cash donations** are almost always the best way to help. Needs at a disaster site change by the hour. Cash allows the relief organizations to purchase exactly what is needed, as it is needed. They also purchase from companies in and around the disaster area, which helps the local economy. Giving money doesn't always feel like you are giving immediate help, but you are. Satisfy the urge to "do something" by having a community yard sale, or bake sale, or benefit concert, and donate the proceeds to a relief organization.
- Supporting relief organizations regularly helps them be ready to respond quickly. Visit www.mainevoad.org to learn about all the volunteer agencies active in disasters, and think of them as you make your annual decisions about charitable giving.
- If you are in a position to volunteer your services, affiliate with a relief organization so that you can be ready to serve when needed. When you sign on as a volunteer it is understood that you can't go everywhere, every time. But when the time is right, your training and credentials are in place and you can be sent immediately where help is needed. Check out www.volunteermaine.org for information about enlisting as a volunteer. Emergency responders and officials may be deployed to other states through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), an interstate mutual aid agreement that allows resources and people to be easily assigned to other states. You should be credentialed and experienced in your response specialty, and notify your County Emergency Management Director that you would be available to be deployed. EMAC teams are sent only as requested by the affected state.
- Don't forget local organizations – food kitchens and local volunteer groups help people every day through emergencies large and small. If you regularly give used clothing and household items to a charity, those items help here, but may also become part of the resources that help disaster victims. Many of Maine's food pantries are also part of a national network that moves resources to affected states during a disaster. If you are a volunteer with a local agency that has a national relief counterpart, you can help here at home, and your training and experience might qualify you to respond to other states as well.
- The hurricane survivors throughout the southeast still have many needs, and hurricane season continues through November 1st. MEMA will be posting links to websites with donation and volunteer information for the affected areas. Visit <http://www.maine.gov/mema> to find out how to help.

As Mainers, we all remember the help received from other states during the ice storm in 1998. We also know what it feels like to want to help others in need. Using these simple guidelines we can help our neighbors near and far to weather the storm.

Deafness Resources

Maine Deaf Services Resource Guide on line:

<http://www.state.me.us/rehab/dod/resource.htm>

Maine Center on Deafness: 207-797-7656 Voice and TTY; 1-800-639-3884 (outside of Portland) E-mail: mcdmaine@maine.rr.com
Division of Deafness: 1-888-755-0023 (TTY Toll-Free within Maine only) and 624-5965 (TTY) 1-800-698-4440 (V Toll Free within Maine only) and 624-5963 (V) 624-5980 (FAX). E-mail: Nancy.A.Melanson@maine.gov

Community Counseling Center/Deaf Services: 343 Forest Avenue, Portland, ME 04101, 874-1043 (TTY); 874-1030 (V); 874-1044 (FAX)
Supervisor/Team Leader: Jana L. Harbaugh, LCSW E-mail: harbaugh@commcc.org

Sign Language Interpreter referral services with emergency on-call (all sign language interpreters must be licensed to work for compensation in Maine):

Pine Tree Society - Deaf Services, 883-0536 V/TTY
www.pinetreesociety.org

Certified Interpreting - 798-7995 V/TTY
www.CertifiedInterpreting.com

Bangor Interpreting Agency 947-2341 V; 947-4337 TTY
bangor.interpreting@verizon.net

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are: **Belinda Arsenault, James Bastille, Sandra Bastille, Daniel Clauson, Robert Dougherty III, Rebecca Franklyn, William Keith, Pamela Pilon, Donald Polk, Glen Willette, and James Willis.**

I would also like to call attention to some of the programs here in Maine that help to provide the training and expertise necessary to our own citizens. These programs not only prepare them for emergencies here at home, but make them highly qualified for the types of disaster assistance work for which they have selflessly volunteered in Florida and other states.

MEMA has administered the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program for several years now, and I am very proud of the progress Maine has made to organize CERT teams across the State. Those CERT volunteers generously give their own time to train for disasters and work to assist first responders in emergency situations.

I also want to highlight the Citizen Corps program, now in its second year in Maine. Through the Homeland Security Grant Program, Maine has been fortunate to receive federal funds to establish four Citizen Corps teams in four Counties, and there are plans in the works to start up even more. Citizen Corps and CERT provide the strong base of trained volunteers that Maine needs to respond to an ice storm, flooding, or other event here at home, and allows us to lead the way in sending assistance to other parts of the nation in the wake of disasters.

In closing, I want to thank these individuals, and all the first responders across our State, for continuing to represent Maine to the highest degree. Your service to those in need, whether your neighbors and others in your community, or total strangers in a state far from here, is a clear reminder of Maine people's spirit, hard work ethic, and commitment to helping others.

Local Community Emergency Response Teams Complete Training

by Darren Woods, AK Deputy Director

Aroostook County has five Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) now trained for response in the Caribou area. The teams cover the towns of Caribou, Connor, Woodland, New Sweden, and Westmanland. All of these teams are coordinated through the Caribou Emergency Management Agency. (CEMA)

With funding through MEMA and guidance provided by Aroostook EMA, CEMA worked on training these individuals as members of local teams which would respond in the event of an incident.

A final hands-on exercise was held on September 18 at the shared Caribou and Aroostook EMA office parking lot. This exercise involved the CERTs working with Cary Medical Center's decontamination equipment. The purpose of this was to allow the teams to become familiar with the set-up of equipment so that they could be of assistance to the hospital in a large event. The CERT would help set up the tent and heaters while the hospital decon team got more information and suited up to receive victims of a WMD event.

The Aroostook County EMA is currently working on getting three more teams started around the County with the assistance of the Americorps/Vista Volunteer program.





**We
Want
to HEAR
from YOU!**

This newsletter was produced by the Maine Emergency Management Agency. We welcome your comments and recommendations regarding its content. Please send contributions, ideas, and questions by December 8 to:

**The MEMA Messenger
72 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0072**

**1-800-452-8735
FAX 207-287-3178
<http://www.maine.gov/mema>**

PLEASE NOTE: Submissions may be edited for length and clarity.

Editor: **Helene A. Whitehouse**
Copy Editor: **Rebecca Amber Whitehouse**
Production Manager: **Eugene A. Maxim**

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Oct. 4, 2004 **Group 3 (HK/WN) Functional Exercise**, Bar Harbor, ME
- Oct. 5–Oct. 7, 2004 **Intermediate Incident Command Course (G 195)**, Bangor, ME
- Oct. 7, 2004 **Group 2 (PT/PS) BIA Functional Exercise**, Bangor, ME
- Oct. 13, 2004 **SARCADIA 04 Tabletop Exercise**, Southwest Harbor, ME
- Oct. 15, 2004 **Hospital Hazardous Materials Operations Course**, Lewiston, ME
- Oct. 19, 2004 **Group 2 (PT) Alford Functional Exercise**, Orono, ME
- Oct. 19–21, 2004 **Exercise Program Manager (G 137)**, Concord, NH
- Oct. 27, 2004 **Group 11 (Prtlnd/So. Prtlnd) Functional Ex.**, Portland/So. Portland, ME
- Oct. 28, 2004 **Bureau of Health & CD County Functional Exercise**, Portland, ME
- Nov. 3–5, 2004 **Advanced Incident Command (G 196)**, So. Portland, ME
- Dec. 7–9, 2004 **Homeland Security Planning (G 408)**, Portsmouth, NH

NOTE: Contact your County EMA Director for further information or check MEMA's online calendar at <http://www.maine.gov/mema/> for up-to-date event information.

**Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management
Maine Emergency Management Agency
72 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0072**

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